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EAST-WEST VOTE ON WEHRMACHT

A free plebiscite should be held in both East and West Germany on the western plans for West German rearmament, the East German Government has proposed.

East German Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl officially proposed on March 2nd that a plebiscite, under international control if necessary, should be held immediately throughout Germany. All men and women over the age of 18 should be asked to answer the question: "Are you in favour of free all-German elections during 1955, or are you in favour of the Paris Agreements?"

Prime Minister Grotewohl proposed that the plebiscite should be conducted on the basis of the Plebiscite Law of the pre-Hitler Weimar Republic, and that in the period of preparation for the plebiscite the following rights should be guaranteed throughout both parts of the country:

The right to conduct free propaganda for all democratic parties and organisations;

Freedom of circulation for all newspapers and magazines throughout Germany;

Freedom of assembly and free speech for all parties and organisations cooperating in the plebiscite.

"We have no objection to the plebiscite being held under international control if the West German Government wishes this" Prime Minister Grotewohl stated. "In addition we are ready to discuss any supplementary suggestions or amendments which the West German Government may like to propose.

"If West German Chancellor Adenauer turns down this proposal, then it is up to all organisations, town councils, etc., in West Germany to organise such a plesbiscite themselves.

"The result of such a plesbiscite will be that the Paris Agreements are swept away, and the path is clear for the reunification of Germany."

Prime Minister Grotewohl declared that the East German Government would never recognise the Paris Agreements "which are invalid for the German people." He called upon all young people in West Germany who were menaced by the call-up for the new Wehrmacht to come to East Germany, where there was peaceful work for all of them.

West German Troops in North Africa?

The West German War Ministry is negotiating with the NATO Council for facilities for the troops of the new West German Wehrmacht to hold their manoeuvres in French North Africa, the Hamburg news magazine "Spiegel" reported on February 23rd.

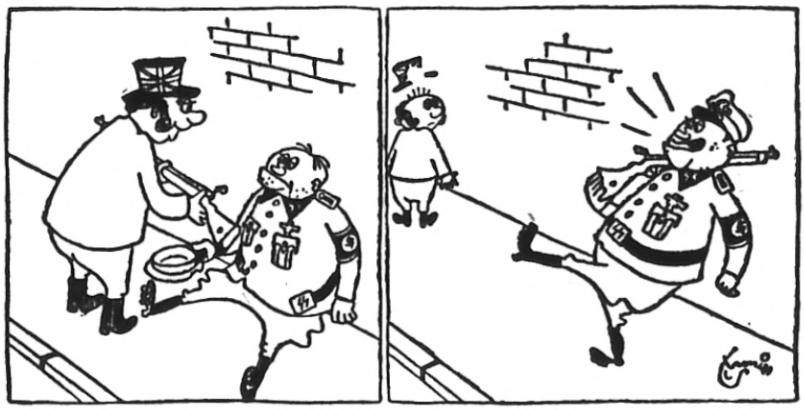
"Fighting Unemployment"

The West Berlin Senator of the Interior, Herr Joachim Lipschitz announced on February 23rd that 200 more clerks had to be employed to deal with the card indexes of the Hitlerite Wehrmacht which are kept in West Berlin. The card indexes are being used by the West German authorities in the preliminary work connected with the establishment of a new West German Wehrmacht.

(West Berlin has about 200,000 unemployed.)

70% Vote Against Wehrmacht

Over 70 % of all voters in the Herford District of West Germany have signed the "Frankfurt Manifesto" protesting against the ratification of the Paris Agreements and the establishment of a new Wehrmacht. The signatures were collected by the local Social Democratic Party organisation.



1955: "Here my poor man" 1956: "We are marching against England"

("Berliner Zeitung", East Berlin)

W. GERMANS PROTEST WEHRMACHT TREATY

The ratification by the West German Parliament of the Paris Agreements establishing a new army led to a storm of protests throughout West Germany. The Paris Agreements were ratified by the Bundestag, the Lower House of Parliament, on February 27th. They still have to be ratified by the Upper House, and also by the French Parliament, before they can go into effect.

On the first day of the ratification debate, February 24th, many thousands of West Germans, particularly workers from the Ruhr, rallied in Bonn, the West German capital, to protest to their members of parliament. Police used fire hoses to disperse the crowds, and to prevent demonstrators from getting near the parliament building.

On the same day more than 40,000 people demonstrated against the Paris Agreements in a big march in Munich.

Following the parliamentary ratification, Erich Ollenhauer, leader of the West German Social Democratic Party, stated: "Our struggle for the reunification of Germany continues." The Baden-Wuerttemberg Provincial Congress of the West German Trade Union Congress called on February 27th for the immediate summoning of the central trade union leadership to consider active measures to prevent remilitarisation.

. . . THEY SAY

Here is what various members of the West German Government Parties said during the debate in the West German Parliament on the ratification of the Paris Agreements (February 24th to 27th):

Dr. Erich Mende (Free Democratic Party): "It is an absolute fairy tale to say that Germany has ever been warlike. Germany only took part in eight percent of all the wars in the world between 1800 and 1940: this proves that it is a fairy tale to say Germany is warlike . . . We shall have to see to it that we can use the 300,000 or 400,000 survivors of the Waffen SS in the new Wehrmacht . . . Let us keep the word 'Wehrmacht' instead of choosing new words like 'fighting forces'."

Herbert Schneider (German Party): "Ten years after the end of the war there are still hundreds of war sentencees (war criminals, ed.). It is impossible to claim that most of these are unsocial elements or criminals. They must be paroled and released."

Dr. Heinrich von Brentano (Chairman of the Christian Democratic Fraction): "In 1945 the allies were not able to liberate the countries in the eastern part of the European continent."

Dr. Linus Kather (BHE — Refugee Party): "We are not ready to recognise the Oder Neisse line (the frontier between Germany and Poland, ed.) We cannot agree to reunification if there is reunification without the German expellee areas . . . like Pomerania, Silesia and the Sudetenland."

Baron Georg Manteuffel-Szoege (Christian Democrat): "By building our defences . . . we can strengthen the inner resistance of the Esthonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, Czechs and Rumanians. In the past these peoples have done nasty things to us, and we have done some nasty things to them, but we should help them . . . Germany has a mission in the western world, to provide the trinity of military force, the new order in the economy, and the moral forces."

Hans-Joachim von Merkatz (German Party): "We have gambled with the great inheritance of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and we lost. Now we must win back what Bismarck and others won. There was seldom such a wise German statesman as Bismarck." (Under Bismarck Germany seized Alsace and Lorraine from France, ed.)

Social Democrats to be Banned?

The West German Government is collecting material to be used in proceedings aimed at banning the Social Democratic Party, Herbert Wehner, member of the Central Board of the Social Democratic Party' stated on February 20th. Herbert Wehner was addressing a meeting protesting against remilitarisation in Winsen, Lower Saxony. "We shall carry the fight against such a ban into every factory" he declared.

MIKOJAN ON GERMANY

A. I. Mikoyan, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, speaking in Leipzig, East Germany on February 28th, stated that the Soviet Union was convinced that it was possible to solve the German problem if West Germany was not remilitarised.

"The remilitarisation of West Germany is the only serious obstacle to German reunification" he said.

"We are convinced that Germany must take its rightful place as a great, peace-loving and democratic power. This is, above all, a matter for the Germans themselves."

36 Countries at Leipzig Fair

Industrial products and raw materials from 36 countries in all parts of the world were on display at the Leipzig Spring Fair, which opened on February 27th. Biggest increase since the last fair was in the exhibition of West German goods, which occupied an area half as big again as in 1954. The British exhibit, including a number of leading British firms, was considerably larger than last year.

Opening the fair, Heinrich Rau, East German Deputy Prime Minister, emphasised that the German Democratic Republic was ready to enter into trade relations with all countries in East and West, and was particularly interested in increasing trade with West Germany.

Democratic GERMAN REPORT

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ANSWERS TO WESTERN QUESTIONS

By Otto Grotewohl, East German Premier

(In a speech in East Berlin, February 19th 1955)

Here are some of the questions asked by West Germans about the German Democratic Republic. First of all there is the question about "personal liberty", about which (West German) Chancellor Adenauer speaks so much.

Many West Germans have the idea that no regard is paid to personal liberty in the German Democratic Republic. This idea has been systematically spread in West Germany for years, and Adenauer is always talking about the "great advantages of western liberty".

But the working people of West Germany do not benefit in any way from what Adenauer means when he says "Liberty", since this liberty is liberty for the big business bosses, and not for the working people. Adenauer's liberty does not fill the stomachs of the unemployed, or protect the craftsmen and peasants from ruin and bankruptcy.

Adenauer's liberty consists of prohibiting the opponents of German militarism, and preventing the entire West German population from deciding for itself on the question of remilitarisation.

Adenauer's liberty consists of dragging the Communist Party, which fights for peace and the unity of our homeland, before a court.

There can only be genuine liberty where there is no exploitation and suppression, where there is no unemployment and mass misery, where no worker needs to fear the future. In West Germany the workers are simply a means to enrich the big business bosses: here in the German Democratic Republic there is no unemployment, and no-one needs to fear that he will have no work tomorrow.

But apart from all this, I feel that there is little point in chattering about "personal liberty" when at the same time all preparations are being made to kill or destroy millions of people in the most devilish manner. This is only a "personal liberty" to die.

Another question often put to us by West German workers is about the work of the trade unions in the German Democratic Republic. They ask why the (East German) Free German Trade Union Federation is a "state trade union" subjected to the state.

Through the trade unions the workers have, in the past, fought great and successful fights with the capitalists to improve their conditions of work and their standard of living.

But what happens when the factories no longer belong to the big business bosses, but to the workers themselves, and when the products of industry are not the property of a few capitalists but of the whole people? What happens when the government is a workers' and peasants' government and works in the interest of the people? Can trade unions continue to act as they used to act, or must they change their methods?

It is clear that basically different conditions demand new methods of work. In our state the basic task of the trade unions is to represent and protect the interests of the working people. But our state is controlled by the workers, and the main job is to strengthen this state with the help of the trade unions.

In our state the factories and the goods they produce belong to the working people, so quite naturally the trade unions must do all they can to develop the economy, to increase and improve production. But this naturally does not mean that the trade unions are subjected to the government.

To see the true position it is only necessary to quote a sentence from the Government Decree issued on December 10th 1953 on "Measures through the Trade Unions to Protect the Rights of Workers and Office Workers" which stated:

> "The trade unions have the right to demand from the relevant Ministries and from the factory managements an accounting of the way in which measures affecting the immediate interests of the workers have been complied with."

At the same time as this decree was being promulgated in the German Democratic Republic, the "Holzarbeiter Zeitung " the organ of the West German Wood Workers' Trade Union stated:

> "We could quote hundreds of cases in which democratic rights proclaimed by parliament are not assured for the workers, since they are economically so dependent on the employer that they do not dare to demand these rights."

Another question which is often raised is the allegation that strikes are forbidden in the German Democratic Republic. The real situation is quite different. There is simply no place for strikes in the German Democratic Republic.

A strike here is not only useless, but it would in every case only damage the workers. I do not know a single case in history where an employer went out on strike against himself. A small craftsman would never think of striking in his own workshop, since that would mean that he went bankrupt.

In exactly the same way, workers who strike in a factory which belongs to them reduce their production and thus make a cut in their own standard of living. In West Germany the workers win concessions from big business by striking, but here in the German Democratic Republic there are no big business bosses, and therefore no-one from whom concessions can be won in this fashion.

Here a worker receives, according to his productivity, what he produces in the factory. Here we do not have the question of winning co-determination for workers in the factories, since there are no monopolists in the German Democratic Republic who could deny the workers such rights.

West German workers also ask questions about the social policy of the German Democratic Republic. The main principle of our social policy is care for the working people. Under the conditions prevailing in the German Democratic Republic the best way in which we can do this is by increasing production.

A real social policy is not a policy of charity and welfare handouts. It must be based upon social justice. The basis for our social policy is the production of our working people. We devote the sum of 4,500 million marks every year for social purposes — one quarter of our total budget. This great sum is controlled and allocated by the workers themselves through the trade unions.

When a worker gets sick, he receives immediately, from the first day of sickness, sick pay from the insurance fund amounting to 50 % of his earnings, and the factory makes this sum up to 90 % of his

average earnings for the first six weeks of sickness. Sick pay can be paid for the first 39 weeks of illness. On this subject we shall have no difficulty in gaining the approval of workers in West Germany.

Another question which often arises is the claim that pensioners in West Germany allegedly live better than in the German Democratic Republic. The fact is, however, that pensions paid here are on the average 20 marks higher per month than in West Germany. We admit freely that we are not satisfied with this, and will continue our efforts to improve pensions at a later date. 46 % of all pensions in West Germany do not exceed 50 marks monthly, while the minimum pension in the German Democratic Republic amounts to 75 marks. In this connection it must be noted that the prices of all basic goods and services needed by pensioners are lower than in West Germany.

AN INDIAN SEES EAST GERMANY

By Amar Lahiri, Indian Journalist stationed in West Berlin

There are no barriers between East and West Berlin. People move freely from one area to the other. Several thousand workers living in East Berlin come daily to work in West Berlin, and vice versa. Many doctors residing in West Berlin are engaged in work in East Berlin hospitals. There is no unemployment in East Berlin, because the Government sees to it that people engage in one sort of work or another. Family relations still exist between East and West Berlin. Part of a German family lives in East Berlin and another part in West Berlin. The prevalence of social intercourse reveals how artificial is the division of Berlin.

One and a half years ago living conditions were not very satisfactory in East Berlin. Today, however, conditions have improved remarkably; people are better dressed and better fed and they have more things to buy than before. Earlier grimness and despondency have been replaced by smiles and confidence. Reconstruction in East Berlin, which suffered more war damage than West Berlin, is going on at a steady pace. Hundreds of new apartment houses have been built and millions of tons of rubble cleared away. The Magistrate has announced that East Berlin will be completely rubble-free by 1957. It estimates that when the war ended East Berlin was strewn with approximately 15 million tons of rubble. A construction lottery bearing three per cent interest payable in 1956, 1957 and 1958 is being officially run to finance new housing projects. The Government has set aside sizable budgetary allocations to execute the house-building programme.

Today not Unter den Linden but Stalin Allee represents the proud achievements of the German Democratic Republic in Berlin. This avenue formerly known as Frankfurter Allee was renamed Stalin Allee on December 21st 1949, and the foundation stone for the first new construction was laid on the same day. In five years Stalin Allee which was thoroughly destroyed in war has been reconstructed into a magnificent apartment line with delicate artistic touches, with flower beds to enhance the beauty of the locality and with rows of shops two miles long. The cream-coloured multi-storey buildings, the nursery schools, the lavish restaurants and the broad sidewalks and all the modern conveniences give a pre-view of the ultimate economic aims of the leaders of the German Democratic Republic. This new miniature skyline has been built mostly by voluntary work. Poland and the Soviet Union had sent their brick-layers and specialists to help the German workers finish their work and they also had sent building machines and materials. Stalin Allee has been officially designated as the "symbol of strength of our Republic and our struggle for national unity."

In July 1953 the Government of the German Democratic Republic adopted a " new course" policy to improve the people's living conditions and to stabilise national economy. This policy is being continued and so far it has yielded commendable results.

The statistical report on the Five Year Plan (1951—1955) released by the Government shows that almost all the revised production targets had been reached by the end of 1954 and that work on the second Five Year Plan (1956—1960) will be undertaken in 1955 to "attain a levelling up of national economy". The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party by the end of 1954 had worked out the second Five Year Plan to step up electric power and to increase the output of lignite mining, chemical industry, consumer goods and agricultural products. The plan envisaged that the house-building programme would be two and a half times larger than the target of the first plan.

Since the introduction of the new course policy, as many as four price reductions had been carried out till the end of 1954. On July 27th 1953 the Government of the German Democratic Republic increased wages for lower paid workers, cut taxes, effected lower delivery quotas for peasants, derationed fish, increased meat rations and reduced prices of a variety of goods from perlon stockings to tea. The price reductions ranged from 20 to 40 per cent, the wage increases averaged 15 per cent and the lower delivery quota reduced the delivery of agricultural products to the State for the second half of 1953 from 700,000 tons to 400,000 tons. The peasants were permitted to sell the remaining products on the free market.

(Condensed from the "Hindustan Standard" special supplement on East Germany, published in Calcutta, India on January 31st.)

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KRUPP IN SPAIN - ATOM BOMB WORK?

American experts in Spain, alarmed at the slow pace of construction of American bases in Spain, have suggested that (West) German firms should be invited to do the work. The West German Ambassador in Madrid, Adalbert Bawarski replied that the Federal Republic was ready "to contribute to the military efforts being made in the Iberian Peninsula when West Germany has become a fully-equal partner in NATO."

German firms have already made offers for work to be done in Saragossa, Madrid and Cadiz, and for naval depots in Ferrol, Valencia, Barcelona and Port Mahon (Balearics).

The firms include Krupps, Hugo Stinnes and other concerns which have often worked for the United States in the past. They are ready to supply material for harbour equipment, steel girders and tubes, material for which American firms have already made favourable tenders.

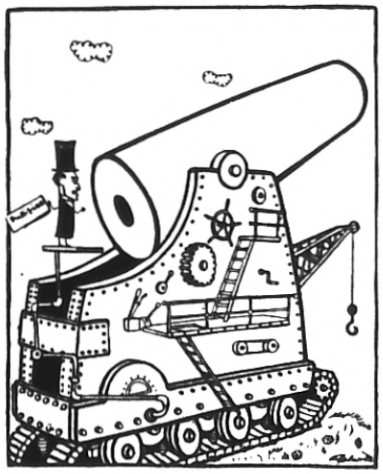
More important than this is the plan which has been drawn up by German atomic specialists. A provisional German-Spanish agreement has been concluded on the establishment of a mixed German-Spanish company to exploit the uranium deposits recently discovered in the Sierra Nevada by German experts.

This mixed company will be based upon a number of German undertakings which were taken under Spanish "custodianship" at the end of the war. The necessary machinery will be provided by West Germany.

This undertaking is said to have the support of Franco's brother and various other official personalities. The company will probably be granted a monopoly for the extraction of uranium not only in Spain but also in Spain's overseas territories, particularly Spanish Guinea.

Circles in close touch with the Spanish Atom Energy Commission believe that the establishment of this company and its supply with Spanish raw materials would make it possible for German technicians to make atom bombs for the new Wehrmacht in Spain in the not too-distant future. The Paris Agreements prohibit the manufacture of ABC weapons (atomic, bacteriological, chemical) in West Germany, but this ban would not cover manufacture outside Federal territory.

("La Tribune des Nations", Paris February 11th 1955.)



KRUPP IS BACK

("De Groene Amsterdamer" Holland)

Cinema Notes

Cinemas in East Germany are showing films from all parts of the world, both East and West. Films at present showing or coming in the next few weeks include the "Pickwick" film from Britain and the British comedy "Geneviève"; "Three Musketeers" from France; the noted strike film "Salt of the Earth" from the United States; "Rome, 11 O'clock" and "Good Day Elephant" from Italy; "Good Soldier Schweik" from Czechoslovakia; "Heart without Love" and "Journey with Obstacles" from the Soviet Union; "People of the Steppe" from China; and "Two Acres of Land" from India.

COMMUNIST BAN TRIAL

Here is a summary of the proceedings before the West German Constitutional Court at Karlsruhe, at which the West German Government is attempting to obtain a ban of the Communist Party (K.P.D.). Summaries of the previous proceedings were given in GERMAN REPORT dated December 10th and 24th 1954.

February 15th: Court reassembles after adjournment from December 16th 1954 and short session on January 31st 1955. Prosecuting Attorney Dix attempts to prove that "Marxism-Leninism is irreconcilable with the free democratic order" in West Germany, and that the K.P.D. must therefore be banned.

Defence Attorney Professor Kroeger submits that the K.P.D. freely admits that it bases its entire policy on the theories of scientific socialism as expounded by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, but denies that these principles conflict with the West German Constitution.

February 16th: Prosecuting Attorney Dix continues his case, reading to the court long extracts from Marxist textbooks such as Lenin's "What Is To Be Done" and Stalin's "Problem of Leninism". He was reduced to silence when Defence Attorney Kroeger asked him to define the meaning of the Marxist terms "basis and superstructure".

When Walter Fisch, representing the K.P.D. attempted to answer Dix's allegations, he was howled down by Dix and another government attorney. They created such confusion that the hearing had to be suspended for 90 minutes.

February 17th: Prosecuting and defence attorney continued their debate on the alleged intentions of Marxism-Leninism. Defence Attorney Kroeger stated that if the government case rested solely upon the alleged unconstitutional nature of Marxist teachings, and not upon any overt acts on the part of the K.P.D., then the K.P.D. must have the right to demand that the whole field of Marxism be considered by the court, and not individual sentences, most of them dealing with other countries and conditions, torn from their context.

The hearing was then adjourned to March 1st, when the court will hear further evidence on Marxist theory.

You Ask — We Answer

HOW DOES A PRODUCTION CO-OP WORK?

There are three types of agricultural cooperative in the German Democratic Republic. In the first type the peasant brings only his land into the cooperative and everything else, garden, grazing and woodland, animals, machinery and tools, remain his private property.

In the second type, the peasant also brings his draft animals and agricultural machinery and tools into the cooperative; he can retain one horse or draft ox and breeding stock.

In the third, most highly socialised type, members bring with them arable and grazing land, woods, draft animals, a proportion of farmyard and breeding stock, and machinery and tools, so that all branches of farming are cooperative.

Membership is completely voluntary but constantly on the increase, since individual peasants see that their cooperative neighbours earn more and have more leisure. The latest figures show a total membership of about 138,000.

Members who decide to leave the cooperative get back their land, or its equivalent on the outskirts of the cooperative, since it is impracticable to have single farms within the boundaries of the cooperative.

The highest authority in all agricultural cooperatives is the members' meeting, which decides all basic questions, elects the chairman, committee and auditors and brigade leaders at the annual general meeting, admits new members or excludes undesirables if necessary.

The members' meeting sets the production plan, decides on expenditure, purchase of stock and machinery, apportioning of work etc.

In all three types, cooperative members can decide at the annual general meeting to retain up to half a hectare (a little over one acre) of land on which to grow vegetables and fruit for themselves. In the third type, the law lays down that every family in the cooperative can keep a certain number of stock and draft animals and an unlimited number of poultry.

All member's land is cultivated cooperatively on the work brigade system, so that machinery from the machine and tractor stations can be put to the best use.

Livestock brought into cooperatives of the third type is looked after mainly by the women's brigades, and stock is being transferred as quickly as building allows into big, modern stalls, where feeding, cleaning and milking etc. are much easier.

Payment of members is done on the work unit system, units being set according to the type and difficulty of work done. For example, a woman looking after cows normally has twelve cows to feed, clean and milk. She gets one work unit per month per cow and for every 100 kilograms of milk with normal fat content of 3.5 per cent an additional $^4/_5$ of a work unit.

Work on the land is carefully rated. For instance, for a simple raking job a normal day's work consists of 4.4 hectares when the breadth of each strip raked is 3 metres, and one day's work is rated at 1.2 work units. But for more difficult work such as horse mowing, the norm for the day is set at 2.95 hectares with a mowing breadth of $1^1/_2$ metres and the value per day set at 1.4 work units.

After all production quotas have been delivered, the cooperative sets aside agreed sums for development purposes, pensions etc., and seed corn for the next year, and then proceeds to distribute earnings to members. These are allocated according to the number of work units booked during the year.

A proportion of the income remaining after everything has been dealt with is also divided amongst members according to the amount and type of land brought into the cooperative. The proportion distributed in this way is different in each type; in the first type of cooperative it can be as much as 40 per cent, in the second 30 per cent and in the third type 20 per cent. Thus payments on this basis decrease in proportion to the increase in socialisation of the cooperative as a whole.

WHAT IS A FACTORY AGREEMENT?

In all big nationally owned factories and works in the German Democratic Republic collective agreements are drawn up each year after discussion between management, trade union committee and workers. In these agreements not only plans and special pledges of individual workers, brigades and departments for fulfilling production targets for the year are set down, but also all pledges undertaken to improve working and general living and cultural conditions for the workers.

The contract is first drafted by members of the trade union committee and the factory management, then thoroughly discussed in all departments and any necessary alterations made before it is finally adopted in a general factory meeting. The contract is printed and every worker in the factory must be provided with a copy. The factory management and trade union committee must call regular quarterly general meetings to report on its fulfillment.

These factory collective agreements cover every detail of life and work in the factory and are often fifty or more pages long. Some points taken from the 1953 collective agreement of the Bergmann-Borsig heavy engineering works near Berlin show how much attention is paid to cultural and educational work in big nationally-owned concerns. According to this agreement, the factory management pledged itself to delegate a total of 56 workers for higher studies at workers' and peasants' faculties (3-year course to qualify for university entrance) technical colleges, schools of engineering, other technical institutes and training schools for administrators, and a further 29 in home study courses in technology, social sciences and engineering.

The factory management also pledged itself to complete the day nursery for workers' children in 1953 and to allocate to it the sum of 250,000 marks. A further pledge is connected with the allocation of funds available for cultural purposes, for financial assistance to the works orchestra, choir, dance group, brass band, painting drawing and sculpture circle, and for works participation in all-German folk art contests.

There are also pledges dealing with improvements in works kitchens and canteens, laying out garden plots and sports grounds, furnishing rest rooms for women workers and similar projects.

Other special points deal with pledges made by the trade union committee, a particularly important one being the allocation of cheques for trade union holiday homes, which are to be distributed in the following proportions: 50 per cent to workers, 10 per cent to members of the technical intelligentsia and 7 per cent to office employees; the remaining 33 per cent to be distributed in the same proportions amongst employees' families.

WESTERN OFFICIAL MOVES EAST

Refugees from East Germany are blackmailed into espionage service when they reach West Germany, stated Heinz Stoeckert, an official of the West German "Ministry for All-German Affairs" who has sought asylum in the German Democratic Republic.

In a signed statement issued to the press on February 21st Herr Stoeckert said:

"My former employment as official in Section S of the Ministry for All-German Affairs, in which I was responsible for information concerning the Red Army, the People's Police and State Security showed me that the policy of the Adenauer Government is contrary to the interests of the German people, and leads towards war. I have come to the German Democratic Republic in order to warn of the criminal war policy of the Adenauer Government."

Herr Stoeckert then explained how persons who had been lured into fleeing from East Germany were cross-examined on military questions by the secret services of the three western powers, and then passed on to the various intelligence services maintained by the West German authorities:

"The refugees are then sent to Section B 1, which is actually the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, which collects military, evonomic and political information and recruits agents for service in the German Democratic Republic. The offices are situated in Rooms 38—44, No. 85 Kaiserdamm, West Berlin, and the office is run by Herr Cossmann, former Colonel of the Hitlerite General Staff. At a staff meeting in August 1953, Cossmann stated: 'Gentlemen, you cannot imagine how cheaply we get excellent spy material here. No government could afford to pay for the wide range of spy material we get here'.

"Section B 2, which is situated in rooms 45—48 at the address given above, is the spy centre for the Ministry of All-German Affairs. Here information of a political, economic and administrative nature is gathered.

"Section B 3 is in reality the spy service of the Blank Office, the West German War Ministry. This office, situated in rooms 15—17 at the same address, collects military espionage information and recruits agents.

"In the same building the espionage organisations 'Fighting Group Against Inhumanity', the 'Free Jurists' and the 'East Bureaus' of the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats and the Free Democrats have their offices.

"If refugees refuse to make statements to these various offices, then they are refused recognition as refugees."

BOOKS ON GERMANY

Small stocks of the following books and pamphlets are still available for readers of GERMAN REPORT:

1. **West Germany Prepares War of Revenge.** Richly illustrated hundred page book giving facts and figures on the rebirth of nazism and militarism in West Germany. First published February 1954. Available in English only.
2. **250 Questions and Answers on the German Democratic Republic.** Over 200 pages of facts and figures on East Germany. Available in German only.
3. **What Dr. John Really said.** A pamphlet giving the full text of the important statement issued in Berlin by Dr. Otto John, former West German Security Chief. Good for distribution at meetings. Available in English and German.
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Wages up, Prices Down in East Germany

Average wages in the German Democratic Republic rose over nine per cent during 1954, the final report on the Economic Plan for 1954 showed. A sweeping price reduction in September meant that retail prices were sharply cut during the same period.

The Plan Report showed that the overall plan for 1954 had been fulfilled, and that industrial production in 1954 was 10 % higher than in 1953, and 76 % higher than in 1950.

The plan was overfulfilled in important raw materials such as coal, iron ore and chemicals. Other branches of heavy industry, such as lignite production and engineering, fell short of the targets set, though production was considerably increased in these branches too.

Here are other points of interest from the plan report:

Agriculture: There were big increases in most crops: nearly 20 per cent more sugar beet and potatoes were harvested than in 1953. The plan report criticised the work of the Ministry of Agriculture in several respects.

Transport: Both the railways and inland water transport failed to reach their plan targets, particularly in the first part of 1954, but in the later part of the year efficiency increased, and much of the lost ground was made up.

Capital Investment: There were big increases in capital investment during 1954 compared with 1953: electric plant up 57 %, coal mining up 33 per cent, food industry up 56 per cent, and housing up 13 per cent. "House building is still carried on too expensively, and building concerns have not yet managed to avoid costly pauses in building activity" the report stated.

Foreign Trade: Foreign trade increased 23 per cent over the 1953 figures and is now two and one half times as great as in 1950. The German Democratic Republic now has foreign trade relations with 70 different countries. Trade with West Germany was 58 per cent bigger than in 1953.

Consumer Goods: In 1954 the population of the German Democratic Republic bought 23 per cent more fish than in 1953; 11 per cent more butter, twice as many cameras and nearly twice as many refrigerators and electric geysers.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

"Of course you are not allowed to criticise anything in East Germany" said an Englishman who visited me recently in my office here in East Berlin.

I could not help thinking of him as I read a newspaper which appeared here last weekend. There is a tradition in Germany that newspapers produce a special humorous number during the carnival period preceding Lent, and this was the "Naerrische Nachrichten", which may be freely translated as "Fools' News".

The paper was on sale throughout East Germany, and it certainly criticised high and low very freely. It may interest readers if I give them some idea of the targets for its parodies, criticisms, and jokes.

Parodies

On the front page, for instance, the paper publishes a parody of the press statements which are issued every week after the weekly cabinet meeting. It is written in the stodgy bureacratic language beloved by the official East German Government Press Office, and is full of those undefinable percentages which are unfortunately often used. The style is not really translatable, but here is a sample of this communique, describing a meeting of the Berlin Carnival Committee:

"In the course of the meeting the proud results were submitted to thorough discussion. It is of particular importance that the restaurants in central Berlin have over-exceeded their norm for carnival balls by 137.8 per cent compared to the figures of the previous year.

"In overall figures the production of humour could be raised by 72 per cent; costs in the entire field of humour, jokes and satire could be reduced by 90 per cent."

The East German newspapers come in for a particular ribbing, with two columns of platitudinous "short news items." One of these columns presents news items of monumental dullness and lack of interest, while the other column presents similar items each with a "progressive" moral dragged in by the skin of its teeth. Here is a specimen:

"Mrs. Selma F. went mad and hit her husband over the head with a book. The campaign against decadent literature must be stepped up, colleagues!"

Slow postal deliveries are criticised in the following way:

"The Central Post Office officially denies rumours that have been spread that it only takes two days for a letter to get from Dresden to Berlin (about 150 miles, ed.). All persons circulating such rumours are hereby given a serious warning. If letters have in fact covered this distance in only two days, this is due to the inexperience of newly appointed postal employees."

My favourite article in this carnival newspaper is an excellent parody of the articles written about art and architecture by a very unpopular critic in an East Berlin daily newspaper. All the artists whom I know agree that this critic knows nothing about art and architecture, and the parody, which is full of empty phrases about "militant sparse monumentality" and "creative lyricism of architectural sculptors", hits off perfectly both his style and his lack of content.

Having got so far, I see that it is almost impossible to give readers much idea of the style and humour of this newspaper. To understand a parody, it is necessary to know what is being parodied. But I should just like to mention other people and institutions who are criticised, parodied or laughed at in this paper: they include high officials who always ride around in their official cars; the railway authorities because trains don't comply with the timetables; the director of East Berlin's main theatre, and East Berlin's chief architect; the East German radio system because of its boring programmes, and dozens of others.

So there is obviously no shortage of criticism, and public and biting criticism, in the German Democratic Republic. And in case any readers should conclude that such criticism is only to be heard once a year, at carnival time, I should perhaps add that it is almost impossible to pick up any newspaper or magazine here which does not contain some criticism of some shortcomings in public life or in the administration.

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No Joke

Here is something quite different. In May 1945, when British troops occupied the North German town of Luebeck, they requisitioned the villa of nazi police president Walter Schroeder. The nazi villa, furnished largely with loot from the occupied countries of Europe, was fittingly enough used to house slave labourers who had been dragged off to nazi Germany from all parts of the continent.

Herr Schroeder kept quiet for the first few years after the war, but in 1952 he applied for, and got, a pension of 1000 marks monthly (nearly 90 pounds sterling) from the West German state as a retired police president; he had been promoted to the rank of police president in 1938 for his particular success in hunting anti-fascists and persecuting Jews.

He also got his villa back. Naturally, after years of requisitioning, the villa was rather run down. So he sued the city authorities of Luebeck for 50,000 marks "restitution" for the damages which he suffered as the result of the requisitioning. The West German Federal High Court in Karlsruhe has just awarded him this sum.

A comment should be unnecessary.

"INNOCENT" WAR CRIMINALS

"Countess Finckenstein: 'In the German view, the majority of the war sentencees (war criminals, ed.) are not guilty of any crime and would never have been sentenced by a German court. Even those few of them who were also guilty according to German law have been imprisoned for ten or twelve years . . . There must be a general amnesty'."

(From a debate on war criminals in the West German Parliament, February 17th 1955. Countess Finckenstein is head of the press section of the BHE, the "Refugee Party".)

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